

Anchorage Daily News (AK)
December 8, 2003

Grant-seeking entrepreneurs sell salmon ideas STATE: \$10 million to help boost industry.

The Associated Press
WIRE

Pink salmon burger promotions and a plan to send Native-style smoked salmon to China are among the 111 proposals the state has received for its Alaska Salmon Marketing Grant Program. The state plans to award about \$10 million in marketing matching funds to private companies. The state received grant applications requesting more than \$20 million, said Glenn Haight, fisheries development specialist with the Department of Community and Economic Development.

The program is part of Gov. Frank Murkowski's \$50 million salmon-industry revitalization strategy, which has included aid for individual fishermen, aid for struggling communities, and economic-development grants.

The Major Grant Program is directed at larger companies, does not carry a funding limit, and requires a 50 percent match.

Mini Grant Program awards, which will focus on mid-sized companies, will range up to \$200,000 and require a match of one-third.

Kake Foods teamed up with Tlingit and Haida Central Council and Raven's Table, a Yakutat smokery, in its request for \$56,000 to market smoked salmon in China.

Don Bremner, a Central Council staff assistant, said a Chinese seafood company approached council staff and expressed interest in importing Native-style smoked salmon for distribution to Chinese schoolchildren.

The partners intend to start distributing smoked salmon strips and nuggets in Shanghai in hopes of expanding to other provinces, Bremner said.

Seattle-based Trident Seafoods submitted nine grant requests totaling more than \$2 million. Most have to do with promoting the company's pink-salmon burger, said marketing director John Salle.

Trident requested more than \$1 million for promoting its salmon burger at Costco, which already carries the product in the southwestern United States and has plans to distribute it in the Northwest.

Trident also proposed a salmon-burger promotion at Joey's Only, a Canada-based seafood restaurant franchise.

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